



Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office

Operations Directorate — Fact Sheet

Civil Search and Rescue Agreements

ISSUE: Civil Search and Rescue Agreements

BACKGROUND: The United States is a signatory to several Conventions pertaining to personnel recovery, specifically civil search and rescue (civil SAR). In doing so, the United States has agreed to conform its national search and rescue services to international standards. A The titles of the key documents, an explanation of their purpose, current actions involving these documents are listed below. The United States Coast Guard is the lead Federal agency for each of these programs.

DISCUSSION:

International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue Manual (IAMSAR Manual). The primary purpose of the IAMSAR Manual is to assist States in meeting their search and rescue needs, and the obligations they accepted under the Convention on International Civil Aviation, the International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue, and the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea. The IAMSAR Manual provides guidelines for a common aviation and maritime approach to organizing and providing search and rescue services. The IAMSAR Manual is the product of the International Civil Aviation Organization and the International Maritime Organization. Copies of the IAMSAR are on file in the Operations Directorate.

National Search and Rescue Committee (NSARC) Agreement. This Agreement provides for a federal level committee to coordinate civil search and rescue matters of interagency interest within the United States. The National Search and Rescue Conference of 1973, when considering the need to establish a continuing interagency group to oversee the National Search and Rescue Plan, established a continuing interagency group to oversee the plan and to act as a coordinating forum for national search and rescue matters. This group is referred to as the National Search and Rescue Committee (NSARC). The NSARC Agreement was recently revised, coordinated throughout DoD, and was approved/signed by the Secretary of Defense on March 3, 1999.